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### **Senate votes to protect jobs, stimulate the economy and promote education**

**LANSING** – The Senate completed work today on a variety of bills designed to protect jobs, stimulate Michigan’s economy and provide scholarships for students in higher education, said Sen. Patty Birkholz.

“With Michigan’s economy still struggling and impacting job providers, families and students, we are committed to providing residents with as many resources as possible to get them back on track,” said Birkholz, R-Saugatuck Township. “Scholarships, tax credits and overtime wages are just a few of the things we can offer to help our families and stimulate the economy.”

The Senate:

- Passed Senate Bill 453 to create the Earned Income Tax Credit for low-income families. It is a state tax credit equal to 20 percent of the federal EITC and will help boost the state’s lagging economy by putting more dollars in the pockets of people who have been struggling to buy needed goods and services.
- Gave immediate effect to House Bill 6213 to save jobs and avert unnecessary costs and burdens when the minimum wage increase takes effect in October. It protects the ability of many employees to work more than 40 hours per week in such industries as retail sales, automotive sales, healthcare and newspapers, among others.
- Passed Senate Bill 1364 to establish a youth minimum wage equal to 85 percent of the current hourly minimum wage. The proposed legislation is designed to provide job opportunities for Michigan’s young workers. There is concern the new higher wage would have a direct and negative impact on thousands of jobs for high school students across the state who are employed in supermarkets, restaurants, movie theaters, golf courses, hotels and retail stores.
- Passed legislation to create a new Merit Award scholarship program that would provide up to \$4,000 for students who complete two years of post-secondary education while maintaining a 2.5 GPA.

“Today we cut taxes for the working poor, stimulated Michigan’s economy, preserved thousands of jobs, created job opportunities for Michigan’s youth and increased funding for college scholarships, ”said Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema, R-Wyoming. “Earlier this summer, I said that in return for fixing the overtime legislation, I was willing to do things that are good for Michigan’s future. Every one of these bills accomplishes that goal.”

The legislation now goes to the House for consideration.

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